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236/1343

PAGE 01

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 01 OF 06 KABUL 1466

MILITARY ADDRESSEES ALSO FOR POLADS; PARIS ALSO FOR USDAO;
DEPARTMENT ALSO FOR NEA/PAB; JIM BRUNO; THE HAGUE FOR
A-DAM AND R-DAM

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REVIEWED by L. M. Kelley DATE 4/28/89

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TAGS: PREL, MOPS, MCAP PHUM PINR, PINS, PROP, SREF, ASEC, UR, AF
SUBJECT: AFGHANISTAN SITUATION REPORT (AUGUST 17-23)

REF: KABUL 1438

1. (C - ENTIRE TEXT.)

2. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION MAY BE BRIEFED TO JOURNALISTS EXCEPT WHERE OTHERWISE NOTED. (NOTE TO BRIEFERS IN ISLAMABAD, PESHAWAR AND NEW DELHI: YOU MAY WISH TO CONSIDER CONCENTRATING ON SUMMARIES AND SELECTED EXCERPTS FROM PARAS 4 AND 5.)

3. SUMMARY:

A. TO BE BRIEFED TO PRESS: THE SOVIETS AND THE REGIME REPORTEDLY ARE SEEKING AN EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS WITH THE MUJAHIDIN IN ORDER TO GAIN THE RELEASE OF SOVIETS CAPTURED IN THE RECENT CAMPAIGN NORTH OF KABUL. MEANWHILE, REPORTS CLAIM THAT SHAKADARA, WHERE FIGHTING CONTINUES, HAS BEEN LARGELY DESTROYED. AFGHAN REPORTS AND DIPLOMATS' OBSERVATIONS INDICATE EXTENSIVE AERIAL AND ARTILLERY BOMBARDMENT IN THE PAGHMAN AREA WHERE THE MUJAHIDIN NONETHELESS ARE CONTINUING TO STRENGTHEN THEIR POSITIONS. NORMAL TRAFFIC HAS RESUMED ON THE SALANG HIGHWAY AFTER A LANDSLIDE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED TRAFFIC ON THE ROUTE. THE SEVERING OF THE KEY SUPPLY LINE FROM THE SOVIET BORDER CAUSED A PROTRACTED SHORTAGE OF AVIATION FUEL AT KABUL AIRPORT. FIGHTING AROUND AND IN KANDAHAR CONTINUES THOUGH AT A REDUCED LEVEL. FIGHTING IS ALSO REPORTED IN WARDAK AND PAKTIA.

B. NOT TO BE BRIEFED TO PRESS: THE DRA'S SUMMER DIPLOMATIC OFFENSIVE APPEARS TO BE WINDING DOWN WITH ENVOYS SOON TO RETURN. AMONG UNANTICIPATED REGIME DIPLOMATIC SUCCESSES WAS A RECENT WARM INDEPENDENCE DAY MESSAGE FROM PHILIPPINES PRESIDENT AQUINO TO NAJIB. A RELIABLE DIPLOMAT REPORTS SERIOUS CONCERN AT SENIOR REGIME LEVELS THAT MUJAHIDIN, IN COLLABORATION WITH OTHERS WHO DISINGENUOUSLY RALLIED TO THE REGIME, MAY ATTACK THE CAPITAL IN THE NEAR FUTURE. A KANDAHAR RESIDENT CLAIMS SOVIET FORCES RECENTLY USED LETHAL CBW AGAINST MUJAHIDIN POSITIONS NEAR KANDAHAR. END SUMMARY.

4. KABUL PYROTECHNICS AND SECURITY:

WHILE KABUL WAS RELATIVELY QUIET, ALMOST NIGHTLY BOMBARDMENTS TO THE NORTH AND WEST BELIED THE TRANQUILITY. SOVIET FORCES ALONG PERIMETER ROAD ONE NIGHT FIRED ON UNKNOWN TAGETS INSIDE THE KABUL BASIN. KABUL RESIDENTS REPORTED SEVERAL EXPLOSIONS, PRESUMABLY CAUSED BY BOMBS OR INCOMING ROCKETS. DIPLOMATS HEARD AND SAW THE FOLLOWING:

--AUGUST 17: AN UNLOCATED EXPLOSION AT 0300: LIKELY

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ARTILLERY IMPACTS TO THE SOUTHEAST AND BOMBING OR ARTILLERY/ROCKET BOMBARDMENT IN THE PAGHMAN AREA TO THE WEST.

--AUGUST 18: OUTGOING ARTILLERY TO THE NORTHWEST FROM 2130 TO 0200 (AUGUST 19) AND AN EXPLOSION AT 2300 TO THE NORTH.

--AUGUST 19: SEVERAL EXPLOSIONS AT 0130; OPERATIONS OF A POWERFUL SEARCH BEAM FROM BIBI MARU HILL WHICH RAKED OVER KABUL FOR APPROXIMATELY 30 MINUTES.

--AUGUST 20: AT 0400 SMALL ARMS FIRE IN SHARE NAU AND AGAIN IN THE EVENING IN KARTE PARWAN; AT 2115 FLASHES OF EXPLODING ORDNANCE IN THE DIRECTION OF PAGHMAN?YD BRIE??TRACER FIRE VISIBLE IN KHAIR KHANA PASS. BEGINNING IN THE EVENING AND CONTINUING THROUGH MUCH OF THE WENK, TWO SOVIET BTR'S WERE POSITIONED IN THE OLD MICRORAYON.

--AUGUST 21: BETWEEN 1945 AND 2030 INTERMITTENT HEAVY MACHINE GUN FIRE FROM THE DIRECTION OF THE AIRFORT; AN EXPLOSION AT 2130.

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PT43100 PAGE 02

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TO THE NORTHWEST.

--AUGUST 23: AT APPROXIMATELY 0130, ONE (POSSIBLY SEVERAL EXPLOSIONS, PROBABLY INCOMING ROCKETS.

5. MILITARY MOVEMENT IN THE KABUL AREA:

A. AIR MOVEMENT:

AIR MOVEMENT WAS RELATIVELY LIGHT EARLY IN THE WEEK BUT BECAME HEAVIER. THE PATTERN MIGHT BE EXPLAINED BY WIDELY REPORTED SHORTAGES OF AVIATION FUEL AT THE AIRPORT, APPARENTLY CAUSED BY A BLOCKAGE OF FUEL STOCK MOVEMENT ON THE SALANG BEGINNING IN EARLY AUGUST (SEE PARA 13, MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS). DURING THE WEEK 22 IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED, DOWN FROM THE 26 OBSERVED THE PREVIOUS WEEK. DIPLOMATS OBSERVED THE FOLLOWING AIR MOVEMENT:

--AUGUST 17: ONE IL-76 ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED.

--AUGUST 18: TWO IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED.

AT 2100 TWO PAIRS OF JET FIGHTERS FLEW OVER KABUL FROM THE NORTHWEST TO SOUTHEAST.

--AUGUST 19: ONE IL-76 ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED.

--AUGUST 20: THREE IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED.

DIPLOMATS NOTED VERY HEAVY AIR MOVEMENT OVERNIGHT (AUGUST 20-21).

--AUGUST 21: EIGHT IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED.

A TL-154 DEPARTED AT 1430 DISPENSING FLARES.

--AUGUST 22: FIVE IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED.

--AUGUST 23: TWO IL-76'S ARRIVED THEN DEPARTED

B. VEHICULAR MOVEMENT:

DIPLOMATS NOTED AN INCREASED VOLUME OF NORTH-BOUND TRAFFIC ON THE SALANG AT THE END OF THE WEEK, PRESUMABLY INDICATING RESUMPTION OF NORMAL TRAFFIC FOLLOWING REPORTED BLOCKAGE OF THE HIGHWAY (DETAILED PARA 13, "MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS.") DIPLOMATS OBSERVED THE FOLLOWING:

--AUGUST 17: 25 SMALL SOVIET FUEL TRUCKS ARRIVING ON THE SALANG HIGHWAY, MOVING EAST ON PERIMETER ROAD; 60 TRUCKS CARRYING FOOD AND OTHER SUPPLIES FROM BAGRAMI TO THE MICRORAYON IN EASTERN KABUL.

--AUGUST 18: FOUR MTLB'S TOWING D-30 GUNS, ESCORTED BY BTR 60'S AND FOUR TRUCKS (ALL SOVIET), FROM PERIMETER TO GHAZNI ROAD; APPROXIMATELY 100 SOVIET ARMORED VEHICLES (BMP'S AND BTR'S) FROM THE SOVIET BASE AT THE NORTHWEST END OF THE AIRPORT TO THE WEST OF KABUL AT 0610.

--AUGUST 19: AT 0545 A SOVIET ARMORED COLUMN CONSISTING OF TWO ZSU 23/4 TRACKED ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS, FOUR BRDM'S, TEN BMP'S AND 16 BTR'S FROM PERIMETER ROAD TO LOGAR; A SOVIET COLUMN OF 25 VEHICLES, INCLUDING APPROXIMATELY 15 ARMORED VEHICLES AND TEN TRUCKS, MOVING NORTH ON PERIMETER ROAD AT 0630; APPROXIMATELY 90 URA TRUCKS AND 60 TRACKED (ARMORED) VEHICLES FROM THE SALANG TO KARGHA ROAD AT 1100; AND 25 VEHICLES, MANY TOWING 122 MM HOWITZERS, AT 1830 STAGED NORTH ON THE SALANG.

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--AUGUST 20: AT 0640 FUEL TRUCKS STAGED NORTH ON THE SALANG.
--AUGUST 21: OVER 20 SOVIET TRUCKS (UNIT ID 1312) MOVING
OFF PERIMETER ROAD NORTH ON THE SALANG.
--AUGUST 22: OVER 50 SOVIET TRUCKS AND FUEL TANKERS, WITHOUT
ARMOR EXCORT, MOVING OFF PERIMETER ROAD HEADED EAST ON
JALALABAD ROAD AT 0535; A SOVIET FUEL CONVOY (EMPTY)
NORTHBOUND ON SALANG ROAD AT 0545, MERGING WITH A MIXED COLUMN OF
TRUCKS (UNIT ID 145) AND ARMOR ALSO NORTHBOUND; AT 0550
JRA FUEL TRUCKS ESCORTED BY ARMOR STAGED NORTH ON THE
SALANG IN DEH KEPAK; AT 0635 A JRA CONVOY OF FUEL TRUCKS
IN EXCEPTIONALLY POOR CONDITION MOVING WEST ON PERIMETER ROAD
IN THE DIRECTION OF THE SALANG.

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PAGE 01

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 06 KABUL 1466

--AUGUST 23: AT 0520 A DRA PATROL OF ARMORED VEHICLES
AND TRUCKS, EACH LOADED WITH DRA TROOPS, MOVING FROM SOUTH
KABUL TO PERIMETER ROAD (WESTBOUND).

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3/6

IMMEDIATE

PT43101 PAGE 02

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6. KABUL PROVINCE (SEE PARA'S 4, 5 FOR KABUL CITY DEVELOPMENTS):
FIGHTING IN NORTHERN KABUL (THE SHOMALI) CONTINUED THOUGH
AT A SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED LEVEL FROM THAT DURING THE
AUGUST 7-15 SOVIET CAMPAIGN IN THE REGION. MULTIPLE
REPORTS INDICATED SOVIET MISCONDUCT IN A VILLAGE LED TO
SOVIET DEATHS AND RETALIATORY BOMBING OF THE VILLAGE.
IN THE WEST, ALMOST NIGHTLY BOMBING IN THE PAGHMAN AREA
APPEARS TO HAVE HAD LITTLE IMPACT ON A STRENGTHENING MUJAHIDIN
POSITION IN THE REGION.

A. KABUL - ORTH: ACCORDING TO THREE AFGHAN SOURCES,
SOVIET TROOPS STATIONED AT BAGRAM AIR BASE ATTEMPTED
TO INTRUDE AT A TRADITIONAL WEDDING CEREMONY IN
A VILLAGE NEAR THE BASE ON OR ABOUT AUGUST 14, REPORTEDLY
SEEKING AFGHAN FEMALES TO BRING TO THE BASE FOR
ENTERTAINMENT. MUJAHIDIN IN THE AREA WERE ALERTED TO
THE SOVIET PRESENCE AND ATTACKED THE TROOPS, KILLING AND
WOUNDING SEVERAL. FOLLOWING THE RETREAT OF THE SOVIETS TO
THEIR BASE, THE VILLAGE WAS BOMBED. A SEPARATE SOURCE
CLAIMS THAT THE SOVIETS WERE AIDED IN THE VILLAGE
INITIALLY BY KHAL FACTION TROOPS WHO SUBSEQUENTLY WERE
ATTACKED BY DRA TROOPS LOYAL TO THE PARCHAM FACTION
OF THE PARTY. THERE ARE ALSO MULTIPLE-SOURCED, CONSISTENT
REPORTS CONFIRMING EARLIER ACCOUNTS (PARA 6A, REFTEL)
THAT JUST PRIOR TO THE LAUNCHING OF THE SOVIETS' SHOMALI
CAMPAIGN, MUJAHIDIN CAPTURED UP TO 30 SOVIET TROOPS,
INCLUDING SENIOR OFFICERS, IN AN ATTACK ON A SOVIET
POST NEAR SHAKADARA. IN THE ATTACK THE SOVIET/DRA TROOPS
SUFFERED APPROXIMATELY 100 CASUALTIES AND LOST SIX
TANKS. A USUALLY RELIABLE AFGHAN SOURCE CLAIMS THAT
THE SOVIETS AND DRA HAVE OFFERED AN EXCHANGE OF PRISONERS,
INCLUDING THE CAPTURED SOVIETS, BUT THAT THE MUJAHIDIN
THUS FAR HAVE NOT RESPONDED. AS OF AUGUST 21 REPORTS
INDICATED THAT FIGHTING WAS CONTINUING IN THE SHAKADARA
AREA WHERE SOVIET FORCES AT LEAST INITIALLY DEPLOYED
TANKS AND OTHER ARMORED VEHICLES ALONG THE ROAD IN FIRING
POSITIONS (AS THEY DID ALONG THE SALANG HIGHWAY - PARA 6A REFTEL).
ADDITIONAL DETAILS CONTINUING TO REACH KABUL PROVIDE SOME SENSE
OF THE INTENSITY OF THE AUGUST 7-15 SIGHTING: AN AFGHAN SOURCE
CLAIMS THAT 70 TO 80 CIVILIANS WERE KILLED IN FIGHTING NEAR BAGRAM
AIR BASE; IN THE QARABAGH AREA, 80 SOVIET AND DRA TROOPS
DIED WHILE MUJAHIDIN LOST 9 KILLED. RECENT REPORTS
CORROBORATE EARLIER ACCOUNTS (REFTEL OF APPROXIMATELY 20
SOVIET ARMORED VEHICLES BEING DESTROYED IN THE FIGHTING AROUND
QARABAGH. RECENT REPORTS ALSO CLAIM THAT THE TOWN OF SHAKADARA
WAS VIRTUALLY DESTROYED IN THE SOVIET BOMBARDMENT.

B. KABUL - WEST: DIPLOMATS OBSERVED NEARLY NIGHTLY
EXPLOSIONS IN THE PAGHMAN AREA, SUBSTANTIATING NUMEROUS
AFGHAN REPORTS OF EXTENSIVE NIGHT BOMBING THERE. ONE
AFGHAN SOURCE WITH MUJAHIDIN TIES CLAIMS THAT THE NIGHT
BOMBING REFLECTS SOVIET FEAR OF MUJAHIDIN SAM CAPABILITY.
(COMMENT: APPARENT SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE

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REDUCED BOMBING ACCURACY ASSOCIATED WITH NIGHT BOMBING AS A TRADE-OFF SUGGESTS CLAIMS OF SOVIET FEAR OF A MUJAHIDIN SAM THREAT ARE ACCURATE.) AFGHANS REPORTED AERIAL BOMBING WAS PARTICULARLY INTENSE ON THE NIGHT OF AUGUST 17-18. (DIPLOMATS OBSERVED THIS BOMBING AS WELL AS EARLY EVENING MULTIPLE ROCKET LAUNCHER VOLLEYS FIRED FROM KHAIR KHANA TOWARD PAGHMAN.) AFGHANS REPORT INTENSE FIGHTING IN THE CHANDAL BAI AREA SOUTH OF PAGHMAN TOWN AUGUST 19. A RELIABLE AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTS MUJAHIDIN CONTINUE TO MOVE INTO THE PAGHMAN AREA, PARTICULARLY THE BEKTUT AREA. ELSEWHERE, A TRAVELER REPORTS THAT ON AUGUST 12 SOVIET-MUJAHIDIN FIGHTING WHICH STRADDLED THE ROAD IN THE DURANI AREA (34°17'N 68°49'E) BLOCKED TRAFFIC ON THE KABUL-GHAZNI ROAD FOR SEVERAL HOURS.

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IMMEDIATE

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PT 43102 : : 256/13423

PT 43102 : 286/13423

PAGE 01

ACT:	PI:	COPIES:	SGS	G1	G2	G3	G4	G5	A6	CA	CE	CH	CP	REC	----
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CONFIDENTIAL SECTION 04 OF 06 KABUL 1466

3. KANDAHAR: A KANDAHARI CLAIMS THAT AS OF MID-AUGUST FIGHTING THERE HAD DIMINISHED THOUGH CLASHES CONTINUED IN MALAJAT AND Koubi (SOUTH OF MALAHAT) AND INSIDE KANDAHAR AT NIGHT. HE JUDGED MUJAHIDIN IN THE KANDAHAR AREA

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WERE "100 PERCENT" STRONGER THAN A YEAR AGO, NOTING THAT THE REGIME ONLY CONTROLLED THE SHARE MAU AREA OF THE CITY. A SEPARATE KANDAHARI NOTED THAT ONLY THREE BAZAARS CONTINUE TO FUNCTION UNDER REGIME CONTROL. THE LATTER ESTIMATED THE KANDAHAR POPULATION TO BE AROUND 30,000. THE FIRST SOURCE BELIEVED THERE HAD BEEN NO CUBANS IN THE KANDAHAR AREA FOR ONE TO TWO YEARS.

8. PARWAN: A RELIABLE DIPLOMAT, SOURCING A RECENT TRAVELER, STAT THAT A LANDSLIDE AT WOLANG (35°16'N 69°07'E) WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR A DISRUPTION OF TRAFFIC ON THE SALANG THROUGH MID-AUGUST (SEE MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS, PARA 13). AS OF AUGUST 19 SOVIET WORK CREWS HAD BLASTED A DETOUR THROUGH THE LANDSLIDE LARGE ENOUGH FOR SMALL TRUCKS TO PASS.

9. LARDAK: A RELIABLE AFGHAN SOURCE REPORTS THAT AIRCRAFT BOMBED THE TOWN OF JALEZE ON THE EVENING OF AUGUST 17, DESTROYING SIX HOUSES. ON JULY 18 MUJAHIDIN ATTACKED A SOVIET POST AT NEARBY MAIDAN, KILLING 12 SOVIETS.

10. HERAT: A REGULAR AFGHAN SOURCE CLAIMS THAT IN JULY LOCAL SELF-DEFENSE FORCES REFUSED TO ENGAGE LOCAL MUJAHIDIN FORCES AND INSTEAD TURNED THEIR GUNS ON SOVIET TROOPS IN THE AREA, KILLING OVER A SCORE. AS A RESULT, KABUL REPORTEDLY DIRECTED THAT MORE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DEFENSE OF HERAT BE GIVEN TO REGULAR DRA FORCES (ARMY, SARANDOI AND "KHAD") AND LESS TO LOCAL MILITIA.

11. PAKTIA: AN AFGHAN REPORTS THE ARRIVAL IN KABUL ON AUGUST 15-16 OF MANY DEAD AND WOUNDED DRA TROOPS FROM RECENT FIGHTING IN THE GARDEZ AREA. A RELIABLE DIPLOMAT REPORTS THAT OF TWO HELICOPTERS RECENTLY DISPATCHED TO SHAMAL (33°18'N 69°34'E) TO RETRIEVE DEAD AND WOUNDED, ONE WAS UNABLE TO TAKE OFF AFTER LANDING. GUARD FORCES HAVE BEEN SENT TO THE SITE AS REPAIRS ARE ATTEMPTED ON THE STRANDED CRAFT. AN AFGHAN REPORT CLAIMS THAT THE RECENT DOWNING OF AN AN-26 AIRCRAFT NEAR KHOST CAUSED CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN THE 15 CASUALTIES CLAIMED BY THE REGIME (PARA 21C, REFTEL) AND THAT ALL PASSENGERS WERE MILITARY.

12. BAGHLAN: A DIPLOMATIC SOURCE OF UNDETERMINED REPORTING ACCURACY CLAIMS THAT IN MID-AUGUST A 100-MAN DEFENSE UNIT DEFECTED TO THE MUJAHIDIN.

13. MILITARY DEVELOPMENTS:

- AVIATION FUEL SHORTAGE: SINCE AUGUST 4, THE TWICE-WEEKLY INDIAN AIRLINES FLIGHT TO KABUL HAS BEEN UNABLE TO REFUEL IN KABUL. THIS, PLUS THE NOT PREVIOUSLY NOTED SHIPMENT OF FUEL BY AIR (AN-12) FIRST OBSERVED AUGUST 4 AND SINCE INDICATES SIGNIFICANT FUEL SHORTAGES AT KABUL AIRPORT. AFGHAN AND EAST EUROPEAN-SOURCED REPORTS

IMMEDIATE

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PT43102 PAGE 03

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OF A BLOCKAGE OF FUEL SHIPMENTS VIA THE SALANG
APPEAR TO BE SUBSTANTIATED ON THE BASIS OF
EYEWITNESS ACCOUNTS OF A MAJOR LANDSLIDE AT
WOLANG (SEE PARA 8, ABOVE) WHICH APPARENTLY BLOCKED
FUEL SHIPMENTS TO POINTS SOUTH.

B. ROAD SECURITY: A TRAVELER REPORTS THAT BETWEEN KABUL
AND KANDAHAR SOVIET AND DRA FORCES MAN 15 CHECK POINTS WHILE
MUJAHIDIN MAN SEVEN. (COMMENT: OTHER TRAVELERS HAVE
OBSERVED THAT SOVIET AND DRA CHECK POINTS ARE LARGELY IN
TOWNS.) A SEPARATE SOURCE CLAIMS THAT THE ONLY SOVIET
CHECK POINT BETWEEN KABUL AND GHAZNI IS AT
THE FORK TO MAIDAN SHAR (34°23'N 68°51'E).

C. BOMB DISCOVERED: AN AFGHAN REPORTS ON AUGUST 18
REGIME SECURITY FORCES REMOVED A BOMB FROM THE DEFENSE
MINISTRY JUST PRIOR TO A MEETING OF SENIOR PARTY AND
REGIME OFFICIALS.

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PT 43104

236/1343

PAGE 01

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UNITS: APT ASOTBD CID COSCOM DRMO HCDBG HQCMDT INSCOM ISC JFK LAO REP ----
MEDCAC RG ROTC SAC SFOD SOCLANT SOCOM SSD SWS 16MP 17MI 18AVN 18CA FLE ----
18FG 18URD 19REP 20ENG 35SIG 82ABN 513MI 525MI 902MI ----

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INFO RUEADWD/FTC WASH DC

RUEORDF/DIRAFMIC FT DETRICK MD//IS//

RUDMNSC/NISC WASHINGTON DC

RUCLAKA/CDR4THPSYOP GP FT BRAGG NC//AFVS-POG-E-SSD//

RUCIAEA/FTD WRIGHT PATTERSON AFB OH//SIIR//

RULWIOC/HQ SAC OFFUTT AFB NE//INOO//

RUEDBIA/CDR513THMIGP FT MONMOUTH NJ//IAM-IC-D//

RHCGSRB/COMUSARCENT FT MCPHERSON GA//AFRD-DSO//

RHHMBRA/CINCPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI

RUCLAKA/CDR8THPSYOPBN FT BRAGG NC

RULWAAA/DIA REP SAC OFFUTT AFB NE

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FM AMEMBASSY KABUL

TO RUEHIL/AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE 3911

RUEHNE/AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE 5613

RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6955

INFO RUEHUU/AFGHAN WAR COLLECTIVE

RUEHIA/USIA WASHDC 1735

RUFHCH/AMEMBASSY COLOMBO 1917

RUFHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 1376

RUSNNOA/USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

RUCLAKA/FT BRAGG NC AFVS//POE//SB

RUHGHQA/CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

RUFQAAA/CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GE

RHFQAAA/HQ USAFE RAMSTEIN AB GE

RHFQAAA/HQ USAFE RAMSTEIN AB GE//INCO

RUDORRA/USNMR SHAPE BE//INTAFF//

RUCJACC/USCENTIOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2-10M//

RUEOLEA/DEFENSE COMMUNICATION SUPPORT GROUP

RUCLSNA/347 TFW MOODY AFB GA//IN//

RUFHSHH/USDOSOUTH NAPLES IT

RUEOAYB/FSTC INTEL OPS CHARLOTTESVILLE VA//AIAST-IOGXCHI//

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 05 OF 06 KABUL 1466

U. MILITARY FUNERAL: ON AUGUST 20 DIPLOMATS OBSERVED
A LARGE MILITARY FUNERAL WHICH DREW SIX BUSLOADS OF DRA
ARMY AND AIR FORCE PERSONNEL TO THE BLUE MOSQUE IN THE "OLD
TOWN."

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14. HUMAN RIGHTS DEVELOPMENTS: SOVIET COMMITS SUICIDE:
ON AUGUST 17 THE SOVIET SOLDIER WHO STRANGLED ONE BOY AND
SHOT ANOTHER (PARA 22, REFTEL) REPORTEDLY KILLED HIMSELF
WITH A SHOT TO THE HEAD AS HE WAS BEING PURSUED FROM THE SCENE
BY REGIME POLICE AND LOCAL PEOPLE.

ALL ASPECTS OF THE REFTEL REPORT HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED EXCEPT
FOR A CLAIM BY SOME AT THE SCENE THAT TWO SOVIET SOLDIERS WERE
INVOLVED IN THE INCIDENT.

15. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS: TECHNICAL LEVEL OFFICIALS HAVE PROVIDED
THE FOLLOWING FIGURES FOR POPULATIONS OF HERAT, KUNDOUZ AND
CHARIKAR AND THEIR ENVIRONS UNDER REGIME CONTROL:
HERAT, 85-115,000; KUNDOUZ, 95-110,000 AND CHARIKAR, 55-60,000.

16. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS: THE AFGHANI-DOLLAR EXCHANGE RATE
IS CURRENTLY ONE DOLLAR BUYS 173 AFGHANIS.

17. KABUL MEDIA:

A. PROVINCIAL PARTY CONFERENCES CONVENED: IN
PREPARATION FOR THE SECOND NATIONAL PDPA
PARTY CONFERENCE (REPORTEDLY TO BE HELD IN SEPTEMBER)
THE PARTY HAS CONVENED PROVINCIAL PARTY CONFERENCES
TO "ELECT" DELEGATES. NAJIB ATTENDED THE
KANDAHAR CONFERENCE ON AUGUST 21 DURING A ONE DAY VISIT
TO KANDAHAR CITY. HE WAS ELECTED A DELEGATE.

B. BARYALAI LOSES ANOTHER POSITION: ACCORDING TO
A RECENT KABUL MEDIA REPORT, THE ASSOCIATION OF
SOVIET GRADUATES IN AFGHANISTAN ELECTED A NEW HEAD
IN AN EARLY AUGUST MEETING, DISPLACING ALTERNATE
POLITBURO MEMBER MAHMOUD BARYALAI, A BABRAK KARMAL
LOYALIST. HIS GRADUAL ECLIPSE FOLLOWS THAT OF THE
OTHER PRINCIPAL PARTY KARMALITE, FORMER POLITBURO
MEMBER ANAHITA RATEBZAD. WHILE THE GRADUATES
ORGANIZATION IS NOT A PROMINENT ONE, HIS REPLACEMENT
CONTINUES A SLIDE NOTED WHEN NAJMUDDIN KAYANI REPLACED HIM
AS HEAD OF THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT OF THE
PDPA, FIRST NOTED JUNE 10.

C. NEW MINISTRY CREATED: THE AUGUST 15 POLITBURO SESSION
ESTABLISHED A NEW MINISTRY OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION, ELEVATING
THE VOCATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF THE MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION
TO THE MINISTERIAL LEVEL.

D. DISCREPANCY IN NUMBER OF RETURNEES CLAIMED BY REGIME:
IN AN AUGUST 19 SPEECH, NAJIB STATED THAT "OVER 70,000"
REFUGEES HAD RETURNED FROM ABROAD IN RESPONSE TO THE NATIONAL
RECONCILIATION PROGRAM. AN ARTICLE IN KABUL NEW TIMES ON
AUGUST 22 PUT THE NUMBER AT 66,367. FOR OVER ONE MONTH THE
"BODY COUNT" WHICH HAD BEEN SLOWLY INCREASING SINCE JANUARY 15
HAS NOT BEEN MENTIONED IN THE KABUL MEDIA. ALTHOUGH A NEW
MINISTRY FOR REPATRIATES WAS ANNOUNCED ON JUNE 25, 1987,
THE ORGANIZATION DESCRIBED IN RECENT MEDIA STORIES AS
HAVING RESPONSIBILITY FOR REPATRIATES IS STILL THE STATE
COMMITTEE FOR REPATRIATES WHICH SUGGESTS THE NEW MINISTRY

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PT 03104 PAGE 03

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MAY BE HAVING ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS.

3. CORRUPTION IN "ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE"

KABUL MEDIA REPORT THAT ON AUGUST 15 THE POLITBURO AGAIN CONSIDERED PROBLEMS OF CORRUPTION IN THE "ATTORNEY GENERAL DEPARTMENT" OF THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE. THE POLITBURO CRITICIZED EFFORTS TO HALT "MISUSE, BRIBERY, MISAPPROPRIATIONS AND OTHER NEGATIVE PHENOMENA" IN THE ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE. THESE LONGSTANDING PROBLEMS HAVE RECEIVED MUCH PUBLICITY DURING THE LAST YEAR. FOUR OFFICIALS OF THE DEPARTMENT WHO ARE ALSO MEMBERS OF THE PARTY WERE DISCIPLINED BY EITHER BEING RELIEVED OF THEIR POSITIONS OR GIVEN WARNINGS.

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PAGE 01

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RUFHKT/AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU 1377

RUSNNOA/USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE

RUCLAKA/FT BRAGG NC AFVS//POE//S6

RUHGHQA/CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

RUFDAAA/CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GE

RHFCAAA/HQ USAF RAMSTEIN AB GE

RHFCAAA/HQ USAF RAMSTEIN AB GE//INCO

RUDORRA/USNMR SHAPE BE//INTAFF//

RUCJACC/USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL//CCJ2-IUM//

RUEOLEA/DEFENSE COMMUNICATION SUPPORT GROUP

RUCLSNA/347 TFW MOODY AFB GA//IN//

RUFHSHH/USJOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

RUEOAYB/FSTC INTEL OPS CHARLOTTESVILLE VA//AIAST-IO/CHI//

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 06 OF 06 KABUL 1466

18. NOT TO BE BRIEFED TO PRESS:

- PHILIPPINES PRESIDENT SENDS CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE:

KABUL PRINT MEDIA AUGUST 23 ACCORDED FRONT PAGE COVERAGE

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PT43103 PAGE 02

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TO A CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE ADDRESSED TO NAJIB FROM CORAZON AQUINO ON THE OCCASION OF THE 68TH ANNIVERSARY OF AFGHAN INDEPENDENCE. THE LETTER TO NAJIB (WHO IS NOT HEAD OF STATE AND IN FACT HOLDS NO REGIME POSITION OTHER THAN COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES) WAS THE ONLY NON-BLUC MESSAGE EXCEPT FOR ONE FROM LEBANESE PRESIDENT GHAMAYEL.

B. DRA DIPLOMATIC FORAYS: KABUL MEDIA REPORT THAT REGIME REPRESENTATIVES HAVE VISITED LIBYA, MALTA, TOGO, THE MALAGASY DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC AND INDONESIA. IN INDONESIA THE DRA ENVOYS REPORTEDLY HAD TALKS WITH "THE LEADING BOODIES OF THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS." SEPARATELY, AN MFA PROTOCOL OFFICER SAID THAT THE VISITS HAD BEEN "GENERALLY A SUCCESS" AND NOTED THAT MOST OF THE ENVOYS ARE NOW ON THEIR WAY HOME.

C. MUJAHIDIN TO ATTACK KABUL?: A RELIABLE DIPLOMAT QUOTES AN AFGHAN CONTACT AS CLAIMING THAT MUJAHIDIN, WORKING IN COLLABORATION WITH "FORMER" MUJAHIDIN IN THE CITY WHO CLAIMED TO HAVE DEFECTED TO THE REGIME AND WHO WERE PERMITTED TO KEEP THEIR WEAPONS, PLAN TO "ATTACK KABUL THIS WEEK." REPORTEDLY KABUL AUTHORITIES ARE AWARE OF AND WORRIED ABOUT THE REPORT.

D. ERMACORA DESCRIBED AS SATISFIED WITH VISIT: KABUL MEDIA CARRY DESPATCHES FROM VIENNA OF THE UNHRC SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ERMACORA'S AUGUST 18 PRESS CONFERENCE. THE REPORTS SAY THAT HE GAVE A POSITIVE EVALUATION OF HIS TRIP TO AFGHANISTAN AND QUOTE ERMACORA AS CALLING THE REGIME'S NATIONAL RECONCILIATION POLICY AS "A STEP FORWARD IN THE SEARCH FOR WAYS TOWARDS A PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF THE AFGHANISTAN SITUATION."

E. NEW SOVIET TROOPS TO KANDAHAR: A KANDAHARI CLAIMS THAT NEW SOVIET TROOPS, FRESH FROM THE SOVIET UNION, WERE FLOWN INTO KANDAHAR AIRPORT IN JUNE-JULY. THE TROOPS ALLEGEDLY WERE IDENTIFIED AS "NEW" BY VITURE OF THEIR MINT-CONDITION WEAPONS.

F. CBW USE IN KANDAHAR: A KANDAHARI REPORTS THAT SOVIET FORCES EMPLOYED LETHAL CBW IN FIGHTING IN THE ARGANDAB AREA IN JUNE-JULY. THE SOVIETS REPORTEDLY TARGETED MUJAHIDIN TUNNEL COMPLEXES. ACCORDING TO THE SOURCE, THERE WERE MUJAHIDIN FATALITIES.

G. POLITICAL RUMORS: AMONG THE U SUBSTANTIATED RUMORS ALFOAT IN KABUL THIS WEEK: BABRAK KARMAL WILL SOON GO TO WARSAW AS AMBASSADOR (5 PERCENT PROBABILITY); KESHTHAND WHO HAS BEEN IN MOSCOW (80 PERCENT PROBABILITY) IS IN POOR HEALTH WITH HEART PROBLEMS (20 PERCENT PROBABILITY); NEMATULLAH PAZHWAQ WILL BE MADE PRIME MINISTER IN THE NEAR FUTURE (15 PERCENT PROBABILITY).

19. MOSCOW MINIMIZE CONSIDERED. EALUM

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